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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 003380

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KISL](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: ISLAMISTS CONDEMN MISTREATMENT OF IRAQI INMATES,
CALL FOR ENDING COOPERATION WITH U.S.

REF: AMMAN 03329

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires David Hale for Reasons 1.5 (b), (d)

1. (U) The Jordanian Islamic Action Front (IAF), the political wing of the national Muslim Brotherhood, issued a scathing statement May 2 condemning U.S. mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners of war (POWs) and claiming that it proved American "contempt" for Islam and the Arab people. The IAF alleged that the "crimes" that took place in the Abu Ghraib prison were only a small example of widespread and repeated "atrocities" committed by coalition forces since the beginning of the invasion of Iraq.

2. (U) The IAF statement further accused the U.S. of actively trying to silence the international media in order to keep secret its "gross human rights violations" in Iraq. It concluded by calling on all Arab and Muslim governments to immediately stop all "support for" and "cooperation with" the American administration.

3. (C) COMMENT: Once again the IAF is trying to raise its profile and increase its popularity on the street by exploiting anti-U.S. sentiment. Although its indignation at the mistreatment of the POWs reflects the general public mood, its call for freezing relations with the U.S. does not. While we will send separately an assessment of the political and public diplomacy impact of the Abu Ghraib story, we have already heard phrases such as "irreparable damage" to the U.S. image, from senior security officials. American statements, including those from the President, are receiving little or no notice from the media. Regardless of the truth, internal investigations are unlikely to gain credibility against the backdrop of skepticism of U.S. motives and a perception that prisoner abuses are widespread in U.S.-controlled Iraqi facilities. It is clear from our initial soundings that the only way to reverse this public diplomacy disaster is to allow independent, credible investigators to get the facts out. End Comment.

4. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

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HALE